

M E T A K N I G H T

A lively and entertaining guide to the hero Dreamland deserves, but not the one it needs right now.



Jonathan Alvarez

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Do not take everything in this letter seriously.
May reading this guide enlighten you, and entertain you.
TL;DR: Spam nair until they die.

- Jonathan Alvarez



D A W N M E D I A

To Strong Bad,
May reading this help you get at least
close to beating me in the MK ditto.

P.S.
Please buff this awful character. Thank you.

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INTRODUCTION

TL;DR: HE BAIR'LY WORKS



So, you're either reading this because a.) you're somewhat interested in this Meta Knight character in Project M; b.) you would like to learn some cool tech and want to honestly get some kick-ass advice for a kick-ass character; c.) you clicked on the wrong link; or d.) you want to lose tournaments. I am writing to you today, to help you, the reader, with the first two points. Sadly, I am not responsible for your loss in tournaments by reading this guide, and immediately attempting to do well with Meta Knight. And as for clicking on the wrong link, well, my hope for you, is that even though you might not have had any intentions of reading a guide over Meta Knight, you stay and read anyway. This guide is

not just for Meta Knight mains, but for everyone who plays Project M. I firmly believe it is important that we try and learn as much as we can with the resources we have regarding any character in the roster. The more you know about one specific character, you can have a better chance either playing with that character, or even playing against that character.

So, my introduction is not going to try and formulate some kind of thesis I will follow through the rest of this scriptural endeavor. This introduction simply has one goal in mind: to get you to read everything after it. I will do my best to not just make this a list of numbers and match-ups, and instead, I will do my best to make this guide interesting, exciting, and humorous along the way.

Alas, I have failed to introduce myself.

Of course, how insensitive of me. I am Jonathan Alvarez, though that name doesn't have much meaning here. My *tag*, is Dawn.

Ever heard of me? Yea. Me neither.

Before you believe everything I tell you regarding Meta Knight, I'll first go more into detail about who I am so that you have confidence that what I am telling you, isn't entirely B.S.

I am best known in the Project M community for my Meta Knight, and my contributions to the Houston stream. Most larger tournaments in the Houston area are streamed by *Dawn Media*: a stream I have taken quite a lot of time setting up and perfecting. I am also known for my combo video, "IDC: A Meta Knight Combo Video." As I am writing this, I am studying English: Creative Writing at the *University of Houston*.

So that's practically everything you need to know. Now sit down, grab some coffee, and maybe your GC controller to practice that Dimensional Cape Drift. Let's begin our journey into the heart of Dreamland's hero: Meta Knight.

M O V E - S E T

FOR THE M2K INSIDE OF US



Every single one of Meta Knight's attacks, uses the sword as a hit-box. I think. Actually, the neutral special might not, but then again, who knows what the hell is going in that tornado... it doesn't even matter because you will never use it, and if you do, you're just wrong. YOU'RE NOT REAL.

It's important to keep in mind, that even though Meta Knight uses a sword for all of his attacks, unlike the other sword characters, Meta Knight has very little range. DO NOT; I REPEAT: DO NOT, let anyone else tell you otherwise. There are plenty of fraud Meta Knight mains out there who think Meta Knight has a lot of range. Please, just please.... DO NOT believe their lies. I won't get too

much further into his range though, because I feel like that would be something better to talk about in another section. For now, let's focus on his move set.

Also, keep in mind I don't subscribe to the philosophy that knowing the exact pixel-detail of a move is entirely necessary, or entirely ideal. I will provide what I believe is useful information, and applicable information. With some dry sarcasm thrown in there along the way, of course. If you would like to know more about a particular move in terms of numbers and frame-data, I have a provided a resource at the end of this guide for just that, along with a few other sources I have used to keep this guide more of a collaboration between great people that have contributed to this community, rather than a work of individual opinion.

Let's get started.



GROUND ATTACKS

Jab

Meta Knight's jab, for lack of a better phrase, sucks ass—plain, and simple. What kind of jab is spinning your useless butter knife around yelling random gibberish in a deep, angry voice!?

Okay, so look... here's the deal: Meta Knight's jab is useful in VERY specific situations. It does come in handy to cover options where other attacks might not be able to cover, but I'll get more into that in the third section of this guide.



Here's some frame data:

The first hit-box comes out on frame 5, which makes Meta Knight's jab his fastest, single-input attack. It lasts for 20 more frames, and the hit-box covers a short distance around his entire body. There is 11 frames of lag after the move is completed¹, making the entire move last a total of 36 frames.

¹ This is probably the one thing that makes Meta Knight's jab a worse option over some of his other attacks. 11 frames is more than enough to get punished against a good player. So, even if you hit someone with the jab, it can still be punished because it has pretty much no knock-back, and very small hit-sun, allowing the opponent to just wait out the frames of the hit-box, and punish those 11 frames.

Dash Attack

Okay, I lied. The hit-box of Meta Knight's dash attack doesn't involve a sword, which explains why it's actually good. I'm kidding². Meta Knight's dash attack is quite good. He freaking stabs your face with the pointy end of his purple Jordan's. It is super fast, and doesn't have too much end lag in comparison to other dash attacks. Its use can come in handy to punish attacks from above, or even just to mix up your approach options. Be careful, however, using it too often. After a few times it will be read by a good player. In general terms of a good smash player, you should only dash attack when you know it will connect.



Frame Data:

The first hit-box comes out on frame 4. The first 3 frames of the hit-box cause almost twice as much knock-back and damage, so keep that in mind. The hit-box of this attack will last for a total of 10 frames, and after that there will be 23 frames of end lag, making Meta Knight's dash attack last a total of 37 frames.

² Sort of.

Forward Tilt



Meta Knight's forward tilt is, in my honest opinion, his second best ground option—mainly in terms of approaching and follow-ups. The first hit has a generously sized hit-box without any lag, and can be completed with the second hit and possibly third depending on how confident you are that they will connect. However, even if you want some extra damage, there's almost no consequence throwing out that first hit of his forward tilt, and if it connects, the second and third hit are pretty much guaranteed. Be wary of the third, final hit of the forward tilt. The hit-box doesn't respect the animation. Meta-Knight sort of swings his sword upwards at a diagonal, yet the hit-box only connects at a very strict, horizontal axis. See the image above to see what I mean.

Frame Data:

The first strike of the forward tilt comes out on... ready for it? FRAME 3
OMG MK OP PLZ BAN 20XX. Meta Knight's forward tilt, is, without question, his fastest attack in the game. It also only lasts 1 frame, but that's okay. We can forgive the PMDT for that. After his first forward tilt, there is 5 frames of lag, which, after those frames you have an additional 14 frames to decide whether or not you want to follow up to the second strike. The second strike is in every way similar to the first, with a smaller hit-box. After the second

strike, you have 19 generous frames to follow up with the final third strike. The last strike is similar to the second, only it has far more knock-back, 3.5 times as much, to be exact. The third strike has around 20 frames of end lag, which makes it far more punishable if you finish all three strikes. It's important to know when to use all three strikes of Meta Knight's forward tilt, and to only go to that third strike if you are confident it will connect.

Up Tilt

Meta knight's Up tilt is a great option for opponents approaching from above, and a great follow-up for certain attacks. The Hit-Box is generously sized vertically, however if you are close enough to an opponent, you can even hit them with the Up-Tilt hit-box from the side. I wouldn't recommend doing that all the time however, since using an Up-Tilt as a horizontal hit-box is not entirely ideal.

Frame Data:

Because Meta Knight is just too badass and has to spin around in a circle while he Up-Tilts, there's some lag on the animation—both before, and after. Before the actual hit-box, there's 7 frames of some fancy Meta-Knight-Twirling startup lag. The hit-box, therefore, starts on frame 7 and lasts for 11 frames. After the hit-box, there is 9 frames of end-lag. This is not too shabby, however, performing an up-tilt with Meta Knight when you aren't sure it will connect is always dangerous,



because the sides of him are very exposed and can be punished easily. So, be very weary of using his up-tilt sporadically.

Down Tilt, or, Meta Knight's salvation.

Meta Knight's down tilt is a teeny poke of awesome, badassary, and without question, his source of viability. Now, there's some technical reasons to why Meta Knight's down tilt is really good, that I will go more deeply into in another section, however, what I can say here, is that the down tilt is Meta Knight's best grounded approach option, and an amazing follow-up for couch cancels. The animation is a lot like Marth's and Roy's. Meta Knight stabs his sword very close to the ground. It also has quite a generous horizontal hit-box. Also, just look at that face he makes. LOOK AT IT. It's like, so freaking cool: his super angry eyes just glare at you while he cuts your feet off.



Frame Data:

The first hit-box comes out on frame 6, which is pretty fast. It lasts, however, much like the rest of Meta Knight's attacks, for only 1 frame. Meta Knight is the ultimate buster of active hit-boxes. You could probably use all of Meta Knight's attacks and count the active frames, and it still wouldn't be more than 1 Game & Watch forward tilt. This isn't entirely a bad thing, however—I'll get more into that later. After the hit-box ends on frame 7, there are 21 more frames of animation, which isn't too bad at all. The entire move lasts a total of 28 frames.

SMASH ATTACKS

Forward Smash, or, the unexpected virtue of the hardest reads

I love, I repeat, I LOVE, Meta Knight's forward smash. It's so... it's like, even against the best players you can charge that thing to the fullest and your opponent still runs into it. It's almost as if the moment Meta Knight swings his arms back to prepare for that 1 frame of immense power, he creates a magnetic field that hypnotizes his adversaries, and results in them automatically gravitating towards it, and your opponent then thinks that the hardest of reads has just occurred. Shoutouts to Kei\$. Basically, the animation before the actual hit-box is atrociously slow, but that's okay because as long as you charge it, the moment you release it, the hit-box comes out wickedly fast.



Frame Data:

The startup of the forward smash lasts 20 frames. So, yea... that's quite a long time. You can then hold the smash attack for 60 more frames, or release it earlier where the attack actually starts. The attack comes out on frame 4, and, of course, lasts for 1 frame. After that, there is 20 more frames of end lag. Here's something to keep in mind with Meta Knight's forward

smash: ALWAYS CHARGE THE HELL OUT OF IT. I mean it. Seriously. Without charging it, the Forward Smash has 71 knock-back. To put that in perspective, the sweet spot of Meta Knight's neutral-air has a knock-back of 157! So, charge it. The difference is tremendous. A fully charged forward-smash hits with 210 knock-back. That's insane! To put that in perspective, Fox's up-smash has 100 KB without charge.

Up Smash

Up smash is Meta Knight's worst ground option—that's probably being a little kind, too. However, that goes without saying it's a completely viable attack. And with the mastery of DACUS, Meta Knight's Up-Smash can even become a spectacular follow up. The animation involves Meta Knight swinging his sword above him at a horizontal angle: creating a very large hit-box that can catch opponents from above. He swings his sword three times—like Link's Up-Smash; only Meta Knight's is far quicker with far less knock-back.



Frame Data:

The charge up of Meta Knight's up-smash before you can release the hit-box lasts for only 3 frames. That's incredibly fast. To put that into perspective, the charge of Fox's up-smash lasts for 7 frames. Meta Knight's up smash is more than twice as fast! Then the hit-box of the up smash comes out on frame 5, so there's 1 tiny little frame of animation between the

charge and hit-box which doesn't really matter. The knock-back on the first two hits is significantly weak, but like any other multiple-hitting smash attacks, the weak knock-back on the first few hits is a good thing. This lets the following hits have a guaranteed connection, all the way until the last hit which has a little bit more knock-back. Sadly, however, the knock-back on that final hit is still pretty anemic considering it is a smash-attack. It kills Lucario at around 150% off the top of Smashville, and floatier characters will be killed by it at around 110%. Never try to use this to kill unless it's the absolute last choice you have. Neutral-air will kill quicker, and is far safer. I would only recommend using Meta Knight's up smash for follow ups, and combo-starters. Each sword swipe lasts for 1 frame, and the end-lag of the animation is 26 frames.

Down Smash

Down Smash is Meta Knight's best tech-chase option, and, of course, I'll explain that more in detail in the next section of this guide. Here's the deal with Meta Knight's down smash: it's good and bad. For one, the weird hit-box makes it awkward to use in situations it wasn't designed to be used for, and the knock-back is only decent—and that goes without saying it hits at such a horizontal trajectory, that omni-teching the down-smash isn't difficult to do. Each sword



swipe is 1 frame long. The animation consists of Meta Knight swinging his sword at a horizontal direction, very close to the ground both in front of him, and behind him. The second hit, or the hit behind him, does a bit more knock-back. The first hit does about 75 KB, and the second hit does about 80 KB. So, if you know you can connect the hit behind him, go for it. Otherwise, use it for its intended purpose: tech-chasing.

Frame Data:

Down Smash, like Meta Knight's up-smash, is super fast. It only takes one frame to charge, and then the hit-box comes out three frames later. The swipe itself, to nobody's surprise, lasts for 1 frame. The second swipe comes out on frame 13. There are 28 frames of lag after the move is completed. The hit-box of the down smash hits pretty low, but not low enough to hit recovering sweet-spots. The horizontal angle is extremely good, considering it hits all around him which makes it such a good tech chase option.

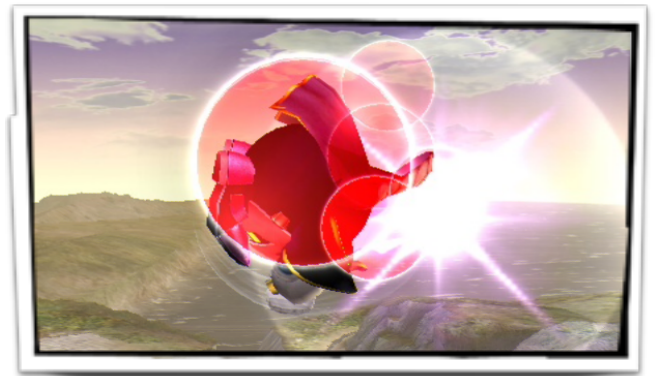


ARIELS

Neutral Air, or, YOU WILL spam this

I think it's a little sad when a guide for a character in Project M resorts to "Spam this until they die." However, there is no denying how amazing Meta Knight's neutral air is. Here's a good way to put it: if I had to restrict myself to use only one single attack, I would pick neutral air 10 times out of 10. It kills, does some decent damage, and is pretty much unpunishable if cancelled correctly. It's literally the perfect concept for a Neutral air. There's a reason I put "Spam nair until they die" in the Author's note of this guide.

Alright, so, let's actually discuss the attack itself instead of glorifying its greatness. There are VERY important things to keep in mind when discussing Meta Knight's neutral air. Firstly, the animation consists of Meta Knight curling up in more of a ball than he already is while he raises up his short little arms as far he can while he swings his sword and twirls a couple of times. That's the neutral air in a nutshell.



Frame Data:

So, here's where things get technical, but also important. I know you've been a good reader so far, and I appreciate that. Don't stop here. Meta Knight's neutral air has some interesting attributes to it. The hit-box is pretty much a big circle around him that gets smaller and smaller over the duration of the animation. As you can see in the images provided above, the first shows the initial hit-box, and the second shows the hit-box towards the end of the animation.